



OFFICE:

306 North State Capitol
Post Office Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

(608) 266-1190
Fax: (608) 282-3632
Toll-Free: (888) 529-0032
Rep.Lothian@legis.state.wi.us

District

539 Park Ridge Road
Williams Bay, WI 53191
(262) 245-5901

32ND DISTRICT

Cities:

Delavan, Lake Geneva

Towns:

Bloomfield, Darien,
Delavan, Geneva, Linn,
Lyons, Sharon,

Walworth, Wheatland

Villages:

Darien, Fontana,
Genoa City, Sharon,
Walworth, Williams Bay

THOMAS A. LOTHIAN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Rep. Tom Lothian
Assembly Bill 723 – Public Hearing
Assembly Committee on Transportation
January 31, 2008

Thank you, Chairman Petrowski and committee members, for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 723. This legislation would simply require drivers to turn on their headlights when there are weather conditions present that reduce visibility.

To most of us, this would seem like common sense. If it is raining, snowing, or foggy, you simply turn on your headlights. It not only enhances your ability to see, it allows other drivers to see you. This legislation would improve the safety of our roadways.

I personally wish that this bill would not be necessary. Unfortunately, too many drivers fail to turn on their lights when conditions warrant their use. My authorship of this bill came out of a conversation that I recently had with one of my constituents. She was traveling down to Illinois on one of the many foggy days that we've had this winter. She was surprised by the number of drivers that failed to turn on their lights. She began counting those drivers and it ended up being close to 75% that drove without their headlights on. She came to me and asked if there was a law requiring this and if not there should be.

Currently, you are required to have your headlights on during "hours of darkness." This covers the time from one half hour after sunset to one half hour before sunrise. It also includes times when there is not enough natural light to see 500 feet in front of your vehicle. In talking to the DOT, it is my understanding that these provisions would not cover fog or snow. This bill would require that your headlights are on during a "period of limited visibility." This would include all climatic conditions that limit visibility to less than 500 feet.

Thank you, again, for allowing me to testify on this important bill. This bill passed overwhelmingly in the Assembly last session, but unfortunately it failed to pass the Senate. I would be happy to answer any questions.